

REMARKS

Claims 1-22 are pending. By this Amendment, claims 1, 2 and 5-8 are amended.

Independent claim 1 is amended to incorporate the features of objected-to claim 6. The other amended dependent claims have been amended to be consistent with amended claim 1.

Independent claim 8 has been amended to change its format and for clarity. Thus, no new matter is added by the above amendments.

The Examiner is requested to consider the reference identified in the Information Disclosure Statement filed herewith.


Applicants note with appreciation the allowance of claims 8-21, and the identification of allowable subject matter in claims 6 and 7. As noted above, the features of claim 6 have been incorporated into independent claim 1.

Claims 1-5 and 22 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) over U.S. Application Publication No. 2003/0038929 A1 to Tokuda et al. This rejection is moot in view of the above amendment to claim 1.

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully submit that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and allowance are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



Mario A. Costantino
Registration No. 33,565

MAC/ccs

Attachment:
Information Disclosure Statement

Date: December 17, 2004

OLIFF & BERRIDGE, PLC
P.O. Box 19928
Alexandria, Virginia 22320
Telephone: (703) 836-6400

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